

TOWN BOARD

The Town Board, Town of Highlands, held a meeting and budget workshop on Monday, August 10, 2015 at Town Hall, 254 Main St, Highland Falls, NY at 6:00pm.

PRESENT:	Mervin R. Livsey	----	Supervisor
	William Edsall	----	Council Member
	James Stradley	----	Council Member (arrived 6:05pm)
	June Gunza	----	Council Member
	Adrienne T. Voltaire	----	Council Member
	Kelly Blauvelt	----	Comptroller
	Justin Rider	----	Counsel
	June Patterson	----	Town Clerk

Supervisor Livsey opened the meeting at 6:00pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

MINUTES

Council Member Edsall made a motion seconded by Council Member Voltaire to approve the minutes from the July 27 Town Board meeting.

MOTION CARRIED: **4-ayes (Livsey, Edsall, Gunza, Voltaire)**
 0-nays
 1-absent (Stradley)

Council Member Gunza made a motion seconded by Council Member Voltaire to approve the minutes from the August 3 Town Board meeting (Budget workshop).

MOTION CARRIED: **4-ayes (Livsey, Edsall, Gunza, Voltaire)**
 0-nays
 1-absent (Stradley)

COMMUNICATIONS

Supervisor Livsey received the Equalization Rate, which is 106%.

Supervisor Livsey received a letter from the NYS Department of Health asking when they can inspect the work at MRS.

FINANCIAL

Accounts Payable:

Supervisor Livsey reported that the total paid last week was \$68,077.52 and this week's payment was \$147,353.96.

Supervisor Livsey said he sent the Mayor and others a letter asking if they thought consolidation of the Planning Boards was a good thing. The Supervisor said he hopes the Village Board will discuss this at their next meeting.

BOARD REPORTS

Council Member Voltaire:

Council Member Voltaire spoke to Suzanne Brahm who informed her that she will be invited to the next Library meeting.

Council Member Voltaire spoke to Richard Sullivan, School Board Member, and he will be taking over Ms. Spiedel's role helping Roxanne Donnery with school aid.

Supervisor Livsey stated getting water to the Fort School has not been as easy as expected, but things are working out.

Council Member Gunza:

Council Member Gunza reported that two police cars are down, but everything else is going well.

Council Member Stradley:

Council Member Stradley said the Village Police held an event called "National Night Out" last week. Mr. Stradley said it was well attended and a lot of fun.

Council Member Edsall:

Council Member Edsall said he spoke to Ted Nugent, Mine Dock Park Committee, who said the recent meeting went well.

Supervisor Livsey said major work is being done down there. The Supervisor said there is a sink hole and pipes are being put in for drainage.

Council Member Edsall said the Planning Board Chair's submitted budget doesn't reflect a consolidated Board.

SUPERVISOR'S REPORT

Supervisor Livsey said the Ambulance Corps has been busy.

Supervisor Livsey stated that he spoke to the Recreation Director about putting clay on Brooks Park and he was told it would need to be watered down before each game. The Supervisor has found a way to get water to Brook's Park and he will talk to the Recreation Director.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Signage:

Council Member Edsall said a degree of this discussion should be held in executive session. Mr. Edsall said, he believes, the billboard on 9W causes problems with aesthetics and sign violations. Mr. Edsall would like to pursue this.

Mr. Rider said the Board can do code changes.

Council Member Edsall said he would like to change the section of the code that addresses billboards.

Council Member Gunza asked about the wording of the code.

Mr. Rider said the code can be written to allow for some things to be "grandfathered" in. Mr. Rider said the code would allow for an amortization period and things would be phased out over a course of a certain number of years. Mr. Rider said, in the current code, some language is arguable, but the new code would not have that.

Supervisor Livsey asked who would do the code.

Mr. Rider said the Town Board would draft the code and he would recommend it be reviewed by the Planning Boards and the Building Inspector.

Council Member Edsall would like to keep it simple and get in on the books quickly.

Council Member Gunza would like Mr. Rider to do the draft.

Mr. Rider said he could probably have it ready by the next Town Board meeting.

Council Member Edsall asked Mr. Rider to get the draft to the Planning Board.

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EMTs:

Supervisor Livsey said Capt. Stroppel has asked that the Town Board hire two EMTs to be put in the “pool”.

Council Member Voltaire made a motion seconded by Council Member Stradley to hire Stefan Shishmanian as a part-time EMT at the salary of \$15.05 with one year probation.

**MOTION CARRIED: 5-ayes (Livsey, Edsall, Stradley, Gunza, Voltaire)
0-nays**

Council Member Stradley made a motion seconded by Council Member Voltaire to hire Matthew Cashman as a part-time EMT at the salary of \$15.05 with one year probation.

**MOTION CARRIED: 5-ayes (Livsey, Edsall, Stradley, Gunza, Voltaire)
0-nays**

Association of Towns:

Supervisor Livsey said Council Member Edsall has questioned whether the Town should remain a member of the Association of Towns. The Supervisor stated that there are 932 Towns in New York and 902 Towns are members.

Council Member Edsall said his problem with the Association of Towns is Home Rule. Mr. Edsall said he is a big consolidation advocate.

The Board agreed to bring this up during budget discussions.

OTHER BUSINESS

Landscaping – 90 Firefighter’s Memorial Drive:

Supervisor Livsey said RFPs were sent out for this job and he received three responses. The Supervisor said Dan Olivia did not give a quote; Hurst Landscaping gave a quote of \$375; Neighbors Landscaping gave a quote of \$850. The Supervisor would like to award this to Hurst Landscaping.

Council Member Voltaire seconded by Council Member Stradley to award the job to Hurst Landscaping at the quoted amount of \$350 and instruct the Building Department to inform them.

**MOTION CARRIED: 5-ayes (Livsey, Edsall, Stradley, Gunza, Voltaire)
0-nays**

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jim Ramus asked about the West Point Golf Course sign that extends over 9W.

Council Member Edsall said that was a State issue.

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Mr. Ramus discussed what his Board has been working on.

Mr. Ramus asked the Board what it was that they signed with the Village.

Supervisor Livsey said it was stating the Town agreed with the concept and they were okay with the Village submitting a grant to do a study on consolidation.

BUDGET WORKSHOP

The Board went right into the budget workshop after the regular business was complete.

Comptroller:

Ms. Blauvelt said she lowered her Contractual a little.

Audit:

Ms. Blauvelt left this at \$25,000 for 2016.

There was a discussion on the audit and the Board asked Ms. Blauvelt to send out RFPs to see what was available.

Ms. Blauvelt said the rest of her budget is Revenues and most of them stayed the same.

Special Items:

Ms. Blauvelt said she left the Contingent Account the same, but it was open for discussion.

Ms. Blauvelt explained what the Special Items were.

Ms. Blauvelt said she sent an email to Scott Liebert, CLG, reference to the insurance costs for next year. Ms. Blauvelt has increased this line by 5% until she hears back from Mr. Liebert.

Ms. Blauvelt said the Municipal Dues are Orange County - \$350 and NYS Association of Towns - \$1,100 and she will leave this until the end of the budget.

Ms. Blauvelt informed the Board that nothing has been spend out of the A or B Contingent accounts.

Supervisor Livsey said he would like to see where this is at the end of budget.

Light District:

Ms. Blauvelt explained this account is for the electricity for the street lights and she raised it by \$2,000.

Council Member Edsall said he spoke to an engineer about a year ago who said he would provide a survey on the lights, but it hasn't been received yet. Mr. Edsall said Orange & Rockland has a program that will update 3% of the light fixtures a year.

Supervisor Livsey asked Ms. Blauvelt to ask Ms. Hurst to look into this.

Ms. Blauvelt explained that the revenues are the same as the expenses for the Light District.

Technical Support:

Ms. Blauvelt lowered this by \$1,000 and it can be re-visited at the end of the budget.

Health Insurance:

Ms. Blauvelt said the Health Insurance line should remain flat due to the fact that two employees have opted to not take the insurance.

Tax Cap:

Ms. Blauvelt said she was asked if there was an exclusion for retirement and/or health insurance. Ms. Blauvelt stated that there is no exclusion for retirement in 2016 and there was never an exclusion for health insurance.

Ms. Blauvelt said if the consolidation of the Planning Boards is going to happen, she needs to know so she can notify the State Comptroller and they can evaluate the tax levy.

Ms. Blauvelt said she is going to ask about retro for some Village services that the Town took over last year.

Supervisor Livsey said there is a reserve fund for when Jim Willis retires and with two other employees near retirement he thinks more money needs to be put in the reserve fund.

Ms. Blauvelt said the amount would be \$9,500 for both employees' or \$3,000 for one employee.

Ms. Blauvelt said she called the EFC and asked if there needs to be a payment budgeted for the sewer bond. Ms. Blauvelt was informed that no payment will be due, just interest. Ms. Blauvelt said since the Town doesn't have the old bond payment that line should be left alone.

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Sewer Plant Vehicle:

Supervisor Livsey said Bob Held, Sewer Plant Operator, has been asking for a vehicle and he recently found one. The Supervisor said the cost of this vehicle is \$4,000 and Mr. Held says it is in good shape. Supervisor Livsey would like the Town mechanic to look at it before it is purchased.

Council Member Voltaire believes that Mr. Held should have a vehicle.

Council Member Edsall made a motion seconded by Council Member Stradley to approve the purchase of the Sewer vehicle for \$4,000 contingent on the Town mechanic inspecting the car to make sure it is in good working order.

**MOTION CARRIED: 5-ayes (Livsey, Edsall, Stradley, Gunza, Voltaire)
0-nays**

ADJOURN

Council Member Edsall made a motion seconded by Council Member Stradley to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 7:25pm.

**MOTION CARRIED: 5-ayes (Livsey, Edsall, Stradley, Gunza, Voltaire)
0-nays**

Attest,